

(583) great majority follow a formalized pattern. At the present time two Chilean-derived marriage ceremonies take place, a civil marriage on a Saturday and a Catholic church marriage on Sunday. However it is on Saturday, after the civil wedding, that the bridegroom's father gives a large feast for both of the extended families involved in the match. It is at this time that the gifts received by the bride's and bridegroom's fathers are formally distributed among their respective families. (583) To aid in this division of the spoils, a "secretary" is appointed to see that each relative receives a gift of value proportionate to the one he originally gave to the gift exchange. All my informants agreed that the marriage gift-exchange ceremony is a period of great and jovial rivalry to see which family has given the biggest and most valuable gifts.

(533) On Sunday evening after the church wedding a general party for the couple is given, and it is at this time that the bridegroom sings a specially composed song to his bride and she, in turn, sings her special song to him, each going to the other's house for the purpose. It is the best of these songs that have been maintained on Easter Island and today compose the more modern corpus of true Easter Island songs.

591 Upon the marriage of a young couple they are free to live in the home of either 439 of their parents, or they may build a home of their own. Actually, living with one 648 or another of the parents is a virtual necessity, owing to the fact that all building 135 materials are brought from the continent once a year by the Chilean Navy and the 342 supply has never caught up with the demand. Further hindering construction is the government's rationing system which, though abundantly fair, allows no single family to buy in one year all the material needed to build a home. This system has (596) resulted in the development, or maintenance, of an extended family pooling system in which, if the family is large enough and each draws his rightful ration of building materials, a house can often be built from the total extended family allotment for a single year. It might also be mentioned that in the construction of such a house, any, or all, of the extended family may be called upon for aid.

423 Although the building of a house is a problem, a young couple as yet has no 648 difficulty in obtaining land. At the present time the Chilean government allows the use-rights to five hectares of terrain to each newly married couple. Formerly an Easter Islander could own his land outright, but this is no longer true, the Chilean government retaining title to all land, owing, apparently, to the strategic nature of the island in the event of war.

606 One of the more interesting facets of Easter Island marriage is the position of the father-in-law in the life of the married couple. Of the two male parents-in-law, it is the girl's father who appears to hold the dominant position of power in the

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marriage. For example, in discussing what would happen if a husband committed adultery, Jorge explained that if the wife found out, or the husband was "too open" about his affair, not only would the wife become very angry but his father-in-law would come to the house and have a severe talk with him. Again, when Martin Rapu was given an opportunity by the Chilean government to go to the continent it was necessary for him to obtain permission to make the trip from Jorge Tepano, his father-in-law. Jorge refused to consent on the basis that, not only was Martin's house incomplete,⁶ but he still owed Jorge several sheets of corrugated iron roofing. Should Martin leave the island he would be unable to return the items, for he would not be included in the following year's ration list. When Martin's father interceded in his son's behalf, Jorge questioned the father by saying, "Why do you want your son to go, for if he goes it is you that must take care of my daughter and that will cost you money."

In this statement we see at least one of the roles of the wife's father-in-law, i.e., as the protector of his son's wife. This role of protector is still very common, if not universal, on the island but, as far as I can gather, comes into play only when the husband is actually leaving the island for any extended time. The responsibilities of this position are fully understood and respected by the wife to the extent that, in one instance, the governor of the island, Commander Curti, was forced to go to a woman's father-in-law to obtain permission for the woman to work for Mrs Curti in the governor's mansion. In this instance the woman was fully mature, being well along in her forties, but her husband had gone to Chile to work and therefore the decision had to be made by her father-in-law.

Further evidence of the important position held by the girl's father in a marriage is seen in the *koro* ceremony which is given by a young husband for his father-in-law to show him what a good son-in-law he has. This is a post-marriage rite which may be given up to a year or two after the couple has married. During the intervening period the husband's extended family helps him collect as many roosters as possible. When a sufficient number have been accumulated, the husband invites his wife's immediate relatives and her extended family to a feast. When the feasting has been completed, the collected roosters appear, each rooster individually tied to a single long rope stretched out upon the ground. There may be from one hundred to one hundred and fifty birds tied to such a rope. With the termination of the feasting the husband presents the string of roosters to his father.

⁵ I came across several cases on the island where the lack of a house, or the incompleteness of a house, was given as the reason for a man's not taking a trip away from the island. The need to properly house one's family before setting off on a long trip appears paramount in the eyes of the Rapa-nui.

584 in-law as a gift. The father-in-law accepts the gift and immediately gives a rooster
 574 to each of his brothers and sisters. If one of his brothers has given a feast in his
 431 honor,⁶ he will then take the remainder of the string of birds and drape it over
 (606) the neck of this particular brother. In doing this he gives the brother the honor of
 starting the apportioning of the roosters among the members of the extended
 family. The brother so honored takes the roosters and gives them to his wife who,
 after taking one herself, passes the string down through the relatives until each
 has one of the birds. In this act the brother has, in effect, been given the same
 honor as that of the "secretary," or *motuha*, who distributes the gifts at the time
 of a wedding.

174 The strong position of a wife's father may hark back to an earlier custom
 584 whereby a mother or father, noting a hard-working bachelor with a good planta-
 606 tion of yams, *camote*, sugar cane, etc., presented their daughter to the man for
 581 his acceptance or rejection. Neither the desires of the daughter nor the age of
 the bachelor in relation to the girl's was considered.

584 The operation of such a marriage was described as follows. Noting a hard-
 working bachelor and seeing in him an opportunity for a "wealthy" marriage for
 their daughter, the father of the girl would either send his daughter to the man,
 or more commonly, take her to the bachelor's home. Upon entering the house,
 the father would ask, "Where are you?" and the bachelor would answer, "Here
 I am," whereupon the father would leave the girl in the house and say, "Here."
 If the bachelor accepted the girl he immediately went outside and gathered to-
 gether chickens, yams, *camotes*, and other foods to make a big *umu* feast for the
 [586] girl's father. However, if at some future date the girl's father felt that his daugh-
 ter's husband was no longer working hard in his fields or at fishing, he had the
 right to come and take her away and give her to some other man. In extreme
 cases a girl was allowed to leave her husband and return home.

177 Today such forced marriages no longer exist, but a father may counsel his
 584 daughter to marry some hard-working bachelor of his choice. If she refuses he
 will wait awhile and again counsel her, repeating this advice until she marries the
 man. As one of my informants put it, "He will keep counseling her until the idea
 [581] and the advantages of such a marriage are well in her head." In such marriages
 one interesting change has been made. No daughter is "counseled" into a marriage
 with a man too much older than she, for, "See how much older brothers fight
 with their too young sisters — it is the same with such a marriage."

⁶ Presumably this refers to a *horo*, although according to Mitterau such feasts honoring a
 brother were not common.